

name, catching the fancy of the undergraduate, speedily became universal. His own name, however, would have described him quite as accurately; for in sheer imperviousness to every extreme of fatigue and exposure, the burliest athlete of the university might have yielded to the slender little man who now stands beside me, smoothing his trim moustache with a hand small and shapely as a young girl's.

I am about to burst into a volley of questions, but Hardy stops me short:

'You know the old proverb: "It's ill talk between a full man and a fasting;" and between *two* fasting men, in my opinion, it is still worse. Here comes those lazy beggars with the dinner at last, thank goodness; so let us eat first, and talk after.'

We do so, and to good purpose. The meal over and the guests dispersed, Hardy draws his chair out into the open, lights a cigar such as only *he* has the gift of picking up, and laughs heartily at my refusal of his offered case.

'Still as great a heathen as ever, eh? I remember we used to chaff you about your non-appreciation of liquor and 'baccy; but I thought all this wandering would have cured you?'

'Well, as to that, I should say that a man who hasn't learned to smoke and drink after four years at Oxford, may be considered hopeless; at all events, I've not learned to drink in Russia and Sweden, or to smoke in Turkey and Syria.'

'Ah, you *have* done your Jerusalem and Damascus pilgrimage, then? I thought as much. But where are you from now?'

'From Arabia last—having a look at the Yemen insurrection? And you?'

'Just across from New Zealand,' answers the Stoic, as coolly as if speaking of a place within five minutes' walk; 'for I don't count my halt at Point de Galle. I've been a *little* about since I left the 'varsity, though

nothing to boast of. Let me see, now—the United States, one; British Columbia, two; the Sandwich Islands, three; Guatemala, four; Brazil, five; Peru, six; Australia, seven; New Zealand, eight; Ceylon (if you like to count it), nine; Egypt, ten. H'm—not so *very* bad for three years' work. How do *you* stand?'

'Ah, my dear Sindbad, I'm nowhere beside you; only five countries outside of Europe, and not much to speak of in *them*. For to-night at least, I yield you the platform, and content myself with listening. Friends will please accept this intimation.'

'If you *can* content yourself with listening,' retorts Hardy, 'you're the first traveller I ever met that could. But what shall I tell you about?'

'Well, I presume there won't be time for the whole of your narrative to-night, so suppose you pick out the best adventure you've had, and tell me that?'

'H'm—let me see. I don't know that I've had any particularly worth telling,' answers the Stoic, with the modesty of true genius. You wouldn't care to hear how I got lost among the spurs of the Andes, or how some Indians took me prisoner in Oregon, or how a cayman nearly gobbled me on the Rio Madeira, or how'—

'Oh, if you call *those* "not worth telling," I give in at once. The best of mine wouldn't be a patch upon 'em.'

'Many thanks for the compliment; but I think I *do* recollect one yarn that'll suit you. Mix yourself another glass of lemonade, and I'll tell you how I paid an hotel bill in California.'

'Come, come, old fellow!' remonstrated I, 'it's giving yourself rather a bad character, to pick out, as the most wonderful event of your whole travels, that you paid an hotel bill!'

'Wait till you I've heard the story,' answered the imperturbable Hardy, lighting a fresh cigar as he spoke, 'there are more ways than one of paying a bill, as you, who are an Oxford man, ought to know. Have you put enough lemon in? Well then—Cur-